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General Assembly

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Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Preparatory Committee
First session
Geneva, 14-15 July 2014
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
Organization of the World Conference

Progress on organization of the World Conference

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In 2012, the General Assembly, through resolution 67/209, decided to convene the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to review implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. In December 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/211 in which it decided that the Third World Conference on Disaster Reduction would be held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015. The General Assembly decided that the World Conference would result in a concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented outcome document with the following objectives:

(a) To complete the assessment and review of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action;

(b) To consider the experience gained through the regional and national strategies/institutions and plans for disaster risk reduction and their recommendations as well as relevant regional agreements under the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action;

(c) To adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

(d) To identify modalities of cooperation based on commitments to implement a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

(e) To determine modalities for periodic review of the implementation of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

2. The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction was requested to serve as the secretariat of the Conference, to facilitate the development of a post-2015

framework for disaster risk reduction and to coordinate the preparatory activities in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

II. Continuity from the First and Second World Conference to the Third World Conference

3. Upon the conclusion of the United Nations International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction from 1990 to 1999, the secretariat published "Living with Risk – A Global Review of Disaster Reduction Initiatives" (2004). It was among the documents used for the ten-year review of the implementation of the 1994 Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action agreed at the First World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, which also contributed to the development of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters at the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005.

4. The Hyogo Framework for Action, as adopted by the Second World Conference, has one strategic objective, three strategic goals and five priorities for actions.[1] A mid-term review was undertaken from 2010 to 2011 which stressed the need to step-up the integration of disaster risk reduction into development planning, climate change adaptation, and environmental and humanitarian planning; the need to improve governance for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action at the national and international level; the need to assess the effectiveness of National Platforms in informing and supporting executive level of decision making; that international, national and local level accountability mechanisms should be encouraged and developed for measuring progress; that targets be encouraged to accelerate Hyogo Framework for Action implementation through 2015; that common tools and guidance be further developed and translated in local languages; that standards be encouraged at regional and national levels to ensure quality of disaster risk reduction services delivered; and that a joint action plan to support implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action at country and local levels be developed to connect the work of different actors to achieve a higher level of coherence and stronger impact of available resources.

5. The work and cooperation in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action has generated a significant body of practice and experience from which some clear principles are emerging. There is now a better understanding that development cannot be sustainable if the disaster risk reduction approach is not fully integrated into development planning and investments, in both the public and private sectors. Every year, thousands of schools, hospitals and other critical infrastructure, including roads, transportation routes, electrical and power facilities and communications networks, are damaged or destroyed,

[1] Hyogo Framework for Action strategic objective: The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries. Hyogo Framework for Action strategic goals: The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning; Development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards; and The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes. Hyogo Framework for Action five priorities of action: 1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation; 2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning; 3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels; 4. Reduce the underlying risk factors; and 5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

thus severely affecting the economy and well-being of communities, cities and countries. Development investment that does not consider disaster risk will lead to the accumulation of more risk. As stated in the 2013 Global Assessment Report, the world can expect losses from disasters to double by 2030 if development investments fail to account for, and address, disaster risk.

6. As discussions on a post-2015 development agenda, a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and a global agreement on climate change evolve, ensuring coherence and complementarity among the agendas is paramount. Anchoring disaster risk reduction within a new development framework, which is supported and elaborated through a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action, will be critical for sustainable development. The overall aim is to reduce the accumulation of risk and ensure that strong action is taken to address the underlying causes of risk that potentially undermine progress on all the agendas.

7. As noted in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/67/335), the work taking place between 2012 and 2014 for the development of a post-2015 disaster risk reduction framework and the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction sets the stage for transforming such accumulated experience and knowledge into new risk management paradigms.

II. Launch of the preparatory process

Coordinating efforts with global partners

8. Consultations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction began in March 2012 involving stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. To date, around 150 consultations with stakeholders on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction have taken place at local, national, regional and global levels.

9. The fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in May 2013, brought together the largest and most diverse range of stakeholders to date, signaling the growing interest in and action on disaster risk reduction. At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly welcomed the deliberations and results of the fourth session of the Global Platform, recognizing it as the main forum at the global level for strategic advice, coordination and partnership development for disaster risk reduction. The Global Platform provided substantive inputs into the development of a successor framework to the Hyogo Framework for Action and called for governments to take a strong lead to ensure that disaster risk reduction is overtly recognized in the post-2015 development agenda.

10. At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly recognized the importance of contributions and participation of all relevant stakeholders, including major groups, parliaments, civil society, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, non-governmental organizations, national platforms for disaster risk reduction, focal points for the Hyogo Framework for Action, local governments representatives, scientific institutions and the private sector as well as organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations. Provisions are being made for their participation at the Conference and its preparatory process.

11. Also at its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly stressed the importance of regional coordination in the framework of the preparatory process in order to promote broad participation in the Third World Conference and in that regard looked forward to upcoming regional platforms and meetings scheduled in 2014. These are:

(a) Fifth African Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction, 13 to 16 May, Abuja, Nigeria;

(b) Fourth Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction for the Americas, 27 to 29 May, Guayaquil, Ecuador;

(c) Pacific Platform, 2 to 4 June, Suva, Fiji;

(d) Arab States Regional Platform, 10 to 12 June, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt;

(e) Sixth Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction, 23 to 26 June 2014, Bangkok, Thailand;

(f) Europe Ministerial Conference, 8 July, Milan, Italy.

12. Outcomes of regional platforms and meetings will be transmitted to the first session of the Preparatory Committee to inform its discussion on considerations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.[2]

The intergovernmental process towards the Third World Conference

13. Through resolution 68/211, the General Assembly decided to establish an Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to review the organizational and substantive preparations for the Conference, approve the programme of work of the Conference and propose rules of procedure for adoption by the Conference. It was further decided to establish a Bureau for the Preparatory Committee consisting of two members of each regional group and that Japan would serve as an ex officio member.

14. By March 2014, regional groups had nominated the following candidates to the Bureau: Md. Abdul Hannan (Bangladesh), Kateřina Sequensová (Czech Republic), María del Pilar Cornejo (Ecuador), Walid Abdelnasser (Egypt), Päivi Kairamo (Finland), Wayne McCook (Jamaica), Andrey A. Nikiforov (Russian Federation), Riek Puok Riek (South Sudan), Toni Frisch (Switzerland) and Thani Thongphakdi (Thailand). Takashi Okada (Japan) was nominated as ex officio member.

15. Guided by the Bureau, the Preparatory Committee will hold two meetings of two days each, from 14 to 15 July 2014 and 17 to 18 November 2014. The General Assembly has also provided for a meeting in Sendai to be decided by the Preparatory Committee if necessary.

Development of a draft programme

16. A draft programme of work of the World Conference was developed by the Conference secretariat in close coordination with the host country and shared with Bureau members-designate (see Annex 1).

17. The Conference's intergovernmental segment is expected to have an opening ceremony, high-level segment, dialogue with major groups, plenary meetings and official statements. Ministerial round tables may be held in parallel to the plenary meetings. The Conference's multistakeholder segment will include thematic/Hyogo Framework for Action sessions and side events. The Conference will also have a public forum and social events,

[2] In addition, a regional consultation meeting was held in Central Asia and the South Caucasus from 1 to 2 April, in Almaty, Kazakhstan. A report of the regional consultation meeting will be available on the World Conference website.

which will include a film festival, architecture exhibit, receptions and ceremonies. Public events will be held in venues outside the restricted zone, thus enabling members of the public to enter freely. The Government of Japan and the local government of Sendai will also hold receptions in addition to Conference's public receptions and ceremonies.

Organizational matters

18. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/209, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction was requested to serve as Conference secretariat. A senior steering group was established within the Conference secretariat to oversee organization and preparations for the World Conference. A working-level team was established to support the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference and to coordinate logistical arrangements and events management for the World Conference with the host country.

19. A budget was developed with the host country. A funding proposal was developed and launched by the Conference secretariat in April 2014. The Government of Switzerland has committed resources for the organization of two meetings of the Preparatory Committee in Geneva. The Government of Japan has committed resources for host-related costs for the World Conference.

20. A United Nations planning mission involving the Conference secretariat and members of the United Nations conference services and security services was undertaken from 10 to 14 March 2014 in Tokyo and Sendai. The mission included visits to facilities to assess space availability and plan for allocation of rooms for official plenaries, multi-stakeholder discussions and public and social events. The allocation of responsibility for security arrangements was clarified between the Government of Japan and the United Nations.

21. A note verbale was sent to States members through their New York-based Permanent Missions and Observer Missions on 6 April 2014 with a copy to Geneva-based Permanent Missions, where appropriate. A copy was also sent to intergovernmental organizations and specialized agencies maintaining permanent offices at United Nations headquarters. A separate note verbale was sent to United Nations Executive Heads of specialized agencies on 3 April 2014 and letters of invitation to United Nations special funds and programmes on 8 April 2014.

22. An online accreditation and registration system for non-governmental organizations and other major groups wishing to participate as observers at the World Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings was launched on 23 April 2014 (http://www.wcdrr.org/majorgroups).

23. Arrangements are being made for financial support to delegates from least developed countries and small island developing States.

24. Arrangements were made with the United Nations Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management regarding documentation and interpretation. A digital strategy is under development to promote the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction as a paper-smart conference.

25. A World Conference website was launched to relay information to prospective participants and members of the media (www.wcdrr.org). The date of the World Conference and meetings of its Preparatory Committee was announced in a message circulated to the secretariat's contact list of 40,000 stakeholders whose work is relevant to the subject of the World Conference and posted on the World Conference website.

26. Plans are in place to promote the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction at related events including the International Conference on Small Island Developing States (September 2014, Appia, Samoa), the Secreraty-General's Climate Summit (September 2014, New York), the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (November 2014, Nagoya, Japan) and meetings related to the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. The International Day for Disaster Reduction on 13 October 2014 wilt be organized to promote the World Conference.

UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
2015 Sendai Japan

The Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction[i]

March 14-18, 2015, Sendai[ii], Japan (Provisional draft)

	Friday Mar. 13		Saturday Mar. 14				Sunday Mar. 15		Monday Mar. 16		Tuesday Mar. 17		Wednesday Mar. 18	
	AM	PM	AM		PM		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	
Inter-Governmental Segment	**Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee (as necessary)[iii]**		**Opening**	**Plenary** Organizational matters	**High Level Forum[iv]**	**Plenary Official Statements**							**Adoption of a Post-2015 Framework for DRR, Declaration and Commitments[v]**	**Closing**
						Ministerial Roundtables / **Dialogue with Major Groups / Stakeholders**								
Multi-stakeholder Segment	**Informal Preparatory & Stakeholders Meetings**					**Thematic/HFA Sessions**								
						Official Side Events								
Public Forum			**Symposium, Fora, Public Events etc.** *(Diverse locations: Tohoku University, Sendai Civic Auditorium, Sendai Prefectural Auditorium, Mediatech Sendai, Yume Messe)*											
			Film Festival, tbc											
			Exhibitions, including Architect Exhibition, tbc											
Social Events *Welcome Receptions, Award Ceremonies, Study Tour and Excursions*						**Reception by Host Country**			**Reception by Host City**		**Risk Award Ceremony**		**Sasakawa Award Ceremony**	
					Study Tour									**Study Tour Excursion**

[i] OP 10 of GA Resolution A/RES/67/209
[ii] OP 10 of A/RES/68/211
[iii] OP 13 of A/RES/68/211
[iv] High-level segment identified in OP 11 of A/RES/68/211
[v] OP10 of A/RES/67/209, OP 12 of A/RES/68/211

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